

THE DRAMA;
OR,
THEATRICAL
POCKET MAGAZINE.

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MRS. BUNN.

"Formed for the tragic scene, to grace the stage,
With rival excellence of love and rage,
Mistress of each great art, with matchless skill,
To turn and wind the passions as she will;
To melt the heart with sympathetic woe,
Awake the sigh, and teach the tear to flow;
To put on *frenzy's* wild distracted glare,
And freeze the soul with *horror* and *despair*."

Mrs. MARGARET AGNES BUNN, is the eldest daughter of Mr. JOHN SOMERVILLE, a most respectable tradesman of the parish of Mary-le-bonne, London. She was born at Lanark, in Scotland, Oct. 26, 1799. During her residence at the seminary of the Misses TRIGGE, at Chelsea, and afterwards at that of the Misses CURTESS, at Paddington, the tendency of the young pupils talents to scenic studies was decidedly manifested. During Miss SOMERVILLE's residence with the Misses CURTESS, she contracted an intimacy with Miss HAYTER, (daughter of the celebrated artist of that name), which intimacy soon ripened into a

friendship of the warmest nature. It is to Mr. GEORGE HAYTER, the eldest brother of that young lady, that the public are chiefly indebted for the first introduction of Miss SOMERVILLE to their notice. Amongst the patrons of that gentleman's art, the Duke of Devonshire holds a distinguished place. His Grace, in his capacity of trustee to Drury-lane Theatre, was the first person to whom Mr. HAYTER mentioned the extraordinary abilities of Miss SOMERVILLE, and, in consequence of this intimation, she was immediately introduced to the Hon. DOUGLAS KINNAIRD, at that time the principal acting manager of Drury-lane Theatre. It is said that on her first essay, the opinion of Mr. KINNAIRD was by no means favourable; but Miss SOMERVILLE immediately, and most assiduously, reverted to her studies. By the zealous friendship of Mr. HAYTER, she was again, in April, 1816, introduced to Mr. KINNAIRD, who attended her performance of some of the finest passages in *Venice Preserved*. On this occasion, Lord BYRON was present, who united his opinion with that of Mr. KINNAIRD, in pronouncing it a most promising performance.

Shortly after, our heroine was invited to the house of Lord ESSEX, where she was introduced to the justly celebrated Mr. KEAN. It was at this party that Mr. KEAN suggested the immediate production of a new tragedy, then in the theatre, for the express purpose of introducing Miss S. to the public. It accordingly took place, and in a few days after, May 9, 1816, this young lady made her first appearance on any stage, at the Theatre Royal, Drury-lane, in the character of *Imagine*, in the tragedy of *Bertram*, by the Reverend C. MATURIN. The task was certainly an arduous one, but then she had not to contend with the comparative claims of any predecessor. Nothing could exceed the glorious welcome of the public, and torrents of applause were showered on her performance. Her conception of the character considering it was her first attempt was certainly good, but still on the whole, did not please us.—She was at one time vehement to the highest degree, at another, she sunk into an almost inaudible whine: the management of her voice (which is one of much compass and harmony) was not attended to with

that judgment which it required, and we remember how it perplexed us with its sudden inflexions, and unaccountable sinkings from lofty tones to mere whispers. Several parts of her performance however were excellent, and one speech in particular was truly admirable—

“ Oh, I do know a tale—

Of one who lov'd—she was of humble birth,

Yet dared to love a proud and noble youth.

His sovereign's smile was on him—glory blazed

Around his path—yet did he smile on her—

Oh then, what visions were that blessed one's!

His sovereign's frown came next—

Then bowed the banners on his crested walls

Torn by the enemies hand from their proud height,

Where twice two hundred years they mock'd the storm.

The strangers step profaned his desolate halls,

An exiled outcast, houseless, nameless, abject,

He fled for life, and scarce by flight did save it.

No hoary beadsman bid his parting step,

God speed!—No faithful vassal followed him;

For fear had withered every heart but *hers*,

Who amid shame and ruin, loved him better.”

Act 1, S. 5.

Her first meeting also with *Bertram* was, full of passionate feeling, and by her efforts, joined to those of Mr. KEAN, the scene was received with enthusiasm by the house. There is no necessity at this distance of time, for us to enter into a lengthened critique upon this her earliest performance, but we must observe that in a great measure the wonderful success of the tragedy must be attributed to her efforts for it was performed 22 nights during the remainder of the season. We are somewhat surprised that the play has not been revived during the present season, when her improvement in her profession might have been perceived by a comparison of the two performances. The tragedy itself, is truly worthy of the British Drama and of the rich and glowing fancy of its highly gifted author.

The young lady's success induced the management to offer an engagement for three years, on very advantageous

terms; and they made her a liberal present for her performance in "*Bertram*." She afterwards performed the part of *Victoria*, in the "*Manuel*," of the above author, but it scarcely afforded her a single opportunity for a display of those talents which begun to shine out with the brightest lustre. The only parts, (we believe,) she afterwards acted, were those of *Alicia*, in "*Jane Shore*," *Teresa*, in "*Rémorse*," and *Imoinda*, in "*Oronooko*." The former displayed very powerful acting, and the latter, although in itself a weak and tamely drawn character, was rendered exceedingly interesting, and exhibited to great advantage the rapid improvement, which intense study, aided by natural genius, could effect. The warmest panegyrics were bestowed upon her by her admirers, and most deservedly so, as she strenuously used every effort that could secure to her a continuance of that approbation. Of the subsequent dissensions in the Drury-Lane management, by which her successful career was interrupted, it is unnecessary here to speak: they are too fresh in the minds of our readers, we therefore pass on to the period when she became the leading-star of Covent-Garden Theatre, in conjunction with the celebrated Miss O'NEIL. She made her appearance on the 22nd Oct. 1818, in the character of *Bianca*, in MILMAN's beautiful tragedy of "*Fazio*," and although her representation in the aggregate could not vie with that of Miss O'NEIL's, yet her delineation of the part left no wish ungratified. She was particularly fine in the scene where the domestic enters, and informs her of her husband's absence, and in the after-scenes we never beheld the devotion, or the jealousy of a wife more admirably depicted. (1)

Her next appearance was in *Adelgitha*, in the late M. G. LEWIS's tragedy of that name, and her performance was again remarkable for frequent and powerful displays of talent. She was greatly applauded when she stabbed *Michael Ducas* (MACREADY,) and although the character lost a main, if not essential source of its interest, after the death of that personage, yet she availed herself of many opportunities to obtain great applause in the fifth act. In

(1) Vide vol. v. page 173.

the terrible and sublime Mrs. B. greatly excels, for which she is particularly fitted by the peculiar strength of her voice and the lofty majesty of her stature, it may therefore be supposed that in the characters of *Roxana*, *Lady Macbeth* and *Elvira*, which she successively played, fierce, haughty, and vindictive, found in her most efficient representatives. For the loftier sphere of tragic exhibition, we always considered her as being particularly fitted, and in the characters which she afterwards undertook, her performances perfectly coincided with our ideas. Thus her *Margaret of Anjou*, in the "*Earl of Warwick*," is entitled to the highest commendation. Wherever vindictive rage, or proud and contemptuous indignation, were to be expressed, she soared far beyond any competitor. Her last scene in this play, was of the most impressive, description and was honoured with high approbation. The character of *Alicia* we have before noticed; though a very natural, it is by no means an agreeable character, and would scarcely be endured in the virulence of her actions and the extravagance of her behaviour, but that she meets with an admirable foil in the remorse, the resignation, and deep silent woe, of her more amiable, but not more fortunate friend. The character lost none of its effect in the hands of our heroine;—many of her speeches were most exquisitely given; her wild exclamation of horror "*Stand off, and let me pass*," &c. on meeting *Hastings* on the way to execution, had a wonderful effect, and the whole of her mad scene, in which she reviles the unhappy *Jane Shore* as the author of her miseries and spurns her from her door, were fine specimens of the histrionic art. Great force and effect were also given to the bolder and more vehement attributes of *Helen* in the tragedy of "*Wallace*;" and of *Meg Merrilies*, there is not a better representative on the stage. Most of her other performances have been already noticed in the preceding volumes of our publication, and we have but few words of advice to give her, and these are merely to modulate her declamation, and now and then to chasten her action, which, although usually dignified and graceful is at times redundant and inelegant. Mrs. BUNN's good sense, study and judgment have already overcome all her

early defects, and she may be now considered as a most brilliant ornament to the metropolitan stage.

Towards the close of her engagement at Covent-Garden, she became the wife of Mr. BUNN, the proprietor of the Birmingham, and the present indefatigable stage-manager of Drury-Lane Theatre, where she has lately reappeared with the most distinguished success in the characters of *Bianca*, *Meg Merrilies*, *Hermione*, and *Queen Elizabeth*.

Mrs. BUNN is understood to be very affable, mild and affectionate : these virtues have attracted round her an extensive circle of all ranks ; while her excellent talents have rendered her a peculiar object of public regard.

LINES

WRITTEN AFTER READING LORD BYRON'S "SARDANAPALUS," AND THE "TWO FOSCARI."

"Hear me my mother, Earth ; behold it, Heaven,
Have I not had to wrestle with my lot,
Have I not suffered things to be forgiven,
Have I not had my brain scared, my heart riven,
Hopes capped, names blighted, life's life lied away,
And only not to desperation driven ;
Because not altogether of such clay,
As rots into the soul of those whom I survey."

CHILDE HAROLD.

BYRON ! the cold, the heartless, may deny
Thy meed of praise, the loud envenomed cry
Of hate, or envy may against thee rise,
And slander's tongue dart forth its poison'd lies ;
The hypocrite, the would-be-seeming saint,
In blackest colours may thy actions paint ;
Proclaim thee lost, an outcast from on high,
And with a curse, bid thee—despair and die.
But when these paltry insects of a day,
Have moulder'd to their kindred dust away ;
When not a wreck is left to tell they breathed,
Then shall the coronal, thy hand has wreathed ;
Despite the whirlwind of their puny rage,
Increase in vigour with increasing age ;
While weeds creep on their undistinguish'd grave,
O'er thine the laurel bough shall proudly wave.

Still let them rave, still let them strive to prove,
The drama asks for skill, thine far above;
When party feeling shall have passed away,
An after age impartially shall weigh
Thy merits with thy slanderers, and thou
Lord of the realms of verse shall stand—as now.
Oh ! who with unaffected heart could dwell
Upon the tale of her who loved so well ?
The fond, the noble hearted MYRRHA, who
Ev'n in her lov'd lord's overthrow was true,
Truth-tired by the severest tests of life,
In law though less, in love the more than wife ;
Her love shrank not before a dreadful doom,
But to devouring flames consigned her bloom ;
Mounted the pile with quenchless energy,
And taught her king, her lover how to die ;
Strange proof of pure disinterested love,
Rising the fears of pain and death above ;
Teaching a form so nursed in luxuries,
As to be shelter'd from the slightest breeze ;
Pamper'd with every splendour fancy craves,
And at whose mandate bow'd a thousand slaves—
Teaching a form like this, not merely breath,
Calmly to yield, but to endure a death,
From which the boldest hearts have shrunk with dread,
Abjured their God, their kin and country fled,
To 'scape the torture of the fiery bed.

Victims of tyranny, ambition, hate,
Who could like BYRON paint FOSCARI's fate ;
With what a master's touch thy pen has traced,
The good old Doge in life's last stage disgraced ;
From the high seat his arm in youth upheld,
With coward insult in old age expell'd ;
His son pronounced an exile—he whose heart
Could not be taught from home to throb apart ;
To him a dungeon's gloom and solitude,
So in his "sunny land," that dungeon stood,
Was thrice more welcome than in foreign lands,
The proudest dome ev'n raised by human hands ;
Then he at least might catch the very breeze,
However slight, that swept his native seas ;

There he might sometime gaze upon the wave,
 In which he loved his boyish limbs to lave;
 Then too sometimes at least his heart might be,
 Cheer'd with some well-remember'd melody;
 And as the last notes fell upon his ear,
 Forget its woes, to give to memory a tear;
 But even this his savage foes denied,
 And doomed him far in other lands to bide;
 Vain mandate, at the moment to depart,
 (His frame destroy'd before,) grief burst his heart.

BYRON ! forgive this worthless lyre of mine,
 That it has dared to echo themes of thine;
 In silent admiration I had stood,
 Listening thy melody's majestic flood;
 But when each paltry scribbler deaf to shame,
 Stands "with unblushing front" to blast thy name;
 The tide of indignation will burst forth,
 And prove I *feel*, ev'n while I *mar* thy worth.

G. J. DE WILDE.

MISQUOTATION.

MR. DRAMA,

In Lady MORGAN's very celebrated novel of "*Florence Macarthy*, vol. 1, p. 146, chap. 2." you will find the following misquotation: "as they descended the declivities, *De Vere* observed, *this is what SHAKSPEARE calls 'a fine, gay, bold-faced villain' :*" now if her ladyship will take the trouble to make further enquiry, relative to the above quotation, she will find it is not SHAKSPEARE's at all, but from OTWAY's "*Venice Preserved*." The blunder appears more remarkable, since it is put into the mouth of so highly read a gentleman, as *De Vere*, who, we are informed in a former page, made SHAKSPEARE his study.

I am, &c.

PETER TOMKINS.

April, 5th, 1824.

SHAKSPEARE'S CONTEMPORARIES.

Continued from page 342.

WILLIAM KEMPE,

Succeeded TARLETON in his office of *Clown*, and as we learn from the quarto edition of SHAKSPEARE's plays, was the original performer of *Dogberry*, in "*Much Ado about Nothing*," and *Peter* in "*Romeo and Juliet*."

Like TARLETON and other celebrated clowns of that period, he was much addicted to extempore wit,—and an instance is recorded, the relation of which, if true, is certainly more calculated to illustrate the manners of our ancestors, than exalt our opinion of their taste, or the talent of their comedians. The whole humour of the joke consists in the bandyage of terms between KEMPE, while performing the *Grave Digger*, in "*Hamlet*," and one of the audience (comfortably seated on a stool upon the stage), on the relative qualities of a hard or soft scull :—when KEMPE determining at once to end the argument, and effectively illustrate his position, struck his antagonist a violent blow upon the head, with one of his digging implements, which stretched him upon the stage ;—thereby says the sage narrator JOSEPH TAYLOR, making much mirthful merriement, and causing the audience to laughe exceedingly !

The talents of KEMPE, were not confined to histrionic representation ; he was author of a merry dramatic conceit, entitled "*The Men of Gotham*," and likewise of a sketch, entitled "*Nine Day's Wonder*," whose ephemeral existence was probably of no longer data than its cognomen indicates.

From an old pamphlet, published in 1589, we learn the high estimation in which the comic powers of KEMPE were held—it is dedicated "To that most comical and conceited cavalier, Monsieur du KEMPE, jest-monger and vice-gerent general to the ghost of DICK TARLETON !"

In BRAITHWAITE's remains, there is an epitaph in commemoration of this performer, which concludes with the following impressive lines :

" They leave thee now to dance the second part,
 With feeble nature, not with nimble art !
 And all thy triumphs, fraught with strains of mirth,
 Shall be caged up within a chest of earth ;
 Shall be ?—they are, thou'st danc'd thee out of breath,
 And now must make, thy parting dance of death !"

JOSEPH TAYLOR.

Appears to have been a celebrated actor in the tragedies of SHAKSPEARE. According to DOUNES, the prompter, he was instructed by " the bard" himself in the delineation of "*Hamlet*," and WRIGHT, speaking of his performance in that part, says " he played it incomparably well." It was from recollection of TAYLOR's performance of the character, that Sir WILLIAM D'AVENANT conveyed his instructions to BETTERTON. He was much celebrated in his representation of *Iago*,—he also performed *Mosca*, in "*Valpone*,"—and after the death of BURBAGE the part of *Ferdinand*, in the "*Dutchess of Malfy*,"—he likewise sustained the principal character in many of the plays of MASSINGER, and those poets who were contemporary with, or the immediate successors, of SHAKSPEARE.

In the year 1614, TAYLOR established himself at the head of a distinct company of comedians, but afterwards returned to his old associates, and after the death of HEMINGE and BURBAGE, he with LOWIN and ELIARD SWANSTON, became principal managers of the king's company. TAYLOR is said to have painted the only original picture of SHAKSPEARE extant ; by others the task is ascribed to BURBAGE, which opinion is rendered probable by the fact, that RICHARD BURBAGE is spoken of as an excellent painter.

JOSEPH TAYLOR died in 1654, he was probably at the time of his decease near 70 years of age.

RICHARD ROBINSON.

ROBINSON was not an actor of eminence, his forte lay in the personification of female characters, although he frequently sustained male parts in tragedy. HART the celebrated tragedian, the original performer of "*Alexander the Great*," was ROBINSON's boy, an apprentice during the civil wars, in the reign of CHARLES I. ROBINSON served in the

king's army, but not actually possessing that courage, which it is probable he frequently assumed upon the stage, or perhaps the *feminine* ideas he had imbibed in his profession, preponderating over associations of a more manly description; during a severe engagement with the round-heads, he threw down his arms and cried for quarter. The plea for mercy was disregarded by the ferocious bigots to whom it was addressed, and one of them with barbarity suited to their tenets, immediately shot him through the brain, at the same time exclaiming.—“cursed is he who doth the work of the Lord negligently!” The puritanical scoundrel was afterwards, on the restoration of CHARLES II, hung at Charing Cross, on a gallows, higher than HAMANS.

(To be continued.)

THE STAGE.

Veluti in Speculum.

Oh, for one sip of Helicontic spring,
To teach my feeble muse the STAGE to sing;
Its *starry* radiance truly to pourtray,
And all its *meteor-glories* to display:
Each *planet's* brilliance give, as justly due,
Each *comet's* transient blaze to bring to view,
To watch each movement in th' dramatic sky—
And note how *falling stars* may droop and die.
First let me mourn the star, now set in night,
Which long hath shone so steady and so bright:
Beneath whose genial influence—kindly rays—
The stage hath flourish'd in its brightest days;—
KEMBLE, sole monarch of the Roman gown,
With high majestic tread and haughty frown:
Patrician scorn to low Plebeian race
By *Natures* hand was printed on his face;
And when he deign'd address the servile crowd,
With what unfeign'd contempt he lowly bow'd:
As though himself he scorn'd, to bend to such,
And felt pollution from their vulgar touch:
Shrinking, as when some filthy reptile's near,

We loath to look on, tho' we cannot fear.
 Who can forget the aged monarch's woes,
 The frantic *Lear's* wild agonizing throes—
 Proud *Wolsey's* tremulous "farewell"—The Dane,
 Deep thinking *Hamlet*—Or the *Scottish thane*—
 The fiery *Hotspur*—Stern *Penruddock's* low
 Consuming grief—a flame conceal'd in snow.—
 Shall I forget the Stage's loss and mine,
 The *Roman three*, whose parts were only thine :
 What other hand shall dare those parts profane,
 While trace of thee shall in our thoughts remain ?
 Let those, who've tried and fail'd, reluctant tell,
 With thee old *Cato*—*Brutus*—*Marcus* fell !
 Thou "*noblest Roman of them all*" farewell !
 While mem'ry lasts, these rays of brightest fame,
 Shall form a brilliant halo round thy name.
 To *SIDDONS* next I turn with mournful eye,
 Fast fading from the histrionic sky ;
 The glorious partner of the *KEMBLE* throne,
 Queen of the stage—first—peerless—and alone.
 The brightest star in all the Drama's sphere,
 Fix'd, steady, brilliant, cloudless, constant, clear.
 No rival e'er could claim with thee to share,
 No one succeeds unto thy vacant chair.
Macbeth's fierce spouse no more the stage shall see ;
 Her terrors all are lost, absorb'd in thee,
 Her fierce impassion'd tone, her scornfull brow,
 Her grace, her dignity, where are they now ?
 And who can ever, after thee, pourtray
 Her conscience-stricken dream—her wild dismay—
 The sigh which made the silent audience start,
 And rous'd the quick pulsation of each heart ?
 Ah, who again, in look, in voice, in mien
 Shall fill thy vacant throne *THALIA's*, Queen ?
 Ye peerless pair farewell !—for ever more,
 Your matchless loss, the Drama shall deplore.
 Pain would I linger o'er the last adieu,
 Pain bring your images once more to view ;
 On former scenes and times, again would dwell—
 But it avails not—all now is o'er—Farewell !

DRAMATIC EXCERPTA, No. V.

MR. DRAMA,

I have just finished perusing HAZLITT'S "Table Talk" and as I have selected several well-timed remarks upon the Drama or in allusion to it therefrom which may be worthy of record in your work, I take the liberty of transmitting them to you for insertion if they are suitable.

I am &c.

Truro, April 12th, 1824.

SAM SAMS SON.

GENIUS AND COMMON SENSE, page 85.

The subtlety in SHAKSPEARE, of which there is an immense deal every where scattered up and down, is always the instrument of passion, the vehicle of character.—The action of a man pulling his hat over his forehead is indifferent enough in itself, and generally speaking may mean any thing or nothing, but in the circumstances in which *Macduff* is placed, it is neither insignificant nor equivocal. "What! man, ne'er pull your hat upon your brows, &c." It admits but of one interpretation or inference, that which follows it!

"Give sorrow words: the grief that does not speak,
Whispers the o'erfraught heart, and bids it break."

The passage in the same play in which *Duncan* and his attendants are introduced commenting on the beauty and situation of *Macbeth's* Castle, though familiar in itself, has been often praised for the striking contrast it presents to the scenes which follow.

Page 88.

When Mr. KEAN was so much praised for the action of *Richard* in his last struggle with his triumphant antagonist, where he stands, after his sword is wrested from him, with his hands stretched out, "as if his *will* could not be disarmed, and the very phantoms of his despair had a withering power," he said that he borrowed it from seeing the last efforts of PAINTER in his fight with OLIVER—This assuredly did not lessen the merit of it—for thus it is ever

with the man of real genius—he has the feeling of truth already shrined in his own breast and his eye is still bent on nature to see how she expresses herself.

Page 102 same subject continued.

The discovery of the binomial theorem, was an effort of genius, but there was none shown in JEDEDIAH BUXTON's being able to multiply 9 figures by 9 in his head.—The only good thing ever heard come from this man's singular faculty of memory was the following—A gentleman sent him up to London to see GARRICK act—when he went back into the country he was asked what he thought of the player and the play—"Oh!"—he said, "He did not know : he had only seen a little man strut about the stage and repeat 7956 words"—All laughed at this, but a person in one corner of the room holding one hand to his forehead, and seeming mightily delighted, called out, "Ah, indeed ; and pray was he found to be correct?"—This was the supererogation of literal matter-of-fact curiosity.—JEDEDIAH BUXTON's counting the number of words was idle enough : but there was a fellow who wanted some one to count them over again to see if he was correct—

"The force of dulness could no farther go."

Page 109, same subject.

Perhaps SHAKSPEARE's tragedies would in some respect have been better, if he had never written comedies at all : and in that case, his comedies might well have been spared, though they must have cost us some regret. RACINE, it is said, might have rivalled MOLIERE in comedy, but he gave up the cultivation of his comic talents to devote himself wholly to the tragic muse :—If, as the French tell us, he in consequence attained to the perfection of tragic composition, this was better than writing comedies as well as MOLIERE and tragedies as well as CREBILLON.—*Venice Preserved* is sufficient for OTWAY's fame.—I hate all those nonsensical stories about LOPE DE VEGA and his writing a play in a morning before breakfast—he had time enough to do it after—Why does Mr. KEAN play all those Harlequin tricks of singing, dancing, fencing, &c?—They

say, "It is for his Benefit."—It is not for his reputation.—GARRICK indeed shone equally in comedy and tragedy—but he was first—not second-rate in both. I have heard of people trying to cross-examine Mrs. SIDDONS, I would as soon try to entrap one of the Elgin Marbles into an argument:—

ON LIVING TO ONE'S SELF, *page 219.*

Suppose an Actor "after the heart-aches and the thousand natural pangs that flesh is heir to,"—does get at the top of his profession, he can no longer bear a rival near the throne: to be second or only equal to another, is to be nothing: he starts at the prospect of a successor, and retains the mimic sceptre with a convulsive grasp; he is in a state of alarm at every appearance, or rumour, of the appearance, of a new actor.—"a mouse that takes up its lodgings in a cat's ear"—has a mansion of peace to him; he dreads every hint of an objection, and least of all can forgive praise mingled with censure. If he does not draw crowded houses every night, he can neither eat nor sleep, or if all these terrible inflictions are removed, and he can "eat his meal in peace"—he then becomes surfeited with applause and dissatisfied with his profession, he wants to be something else, to be distinguished as an author or a classical scholar a man of sense and information—and weighs every word he utters, and half retracts it before he utters it—lest if he were to make the smallest slip of the tongue, it should get yet buzzed abroad that Mr. ——— *was only clever as an actor!*

DRAMATIC FRAGMENTA.

"I am but a gatherer."

WOTTON.

167.—PLAYS IN THE TEMPLE.

The Societies of the two Temples gave grand entertain-

ments at their halls to the Lord Chancellor and many of the nobility in February, 1715 ; but the most remarkable accompaniment to these convivial meetings was the representation of the comedy of *The Chances*, performed within the greater hall by the comedians of Drury-lane Theatre.

169.—A SPEAKING DOG.

The following paragraph occurs in the Weekly Journal of March 15, 1718 ; from which an idea may be formed of the audience of Sadler's Wells about that period : " Sadler's Wells being lately opened, there is likely to be a great resort of strolling damsels, half-pay officers, peripathetic tradesmen, tars, butchers, and others that are musically inclined," who had an opportunity this year of gratifying their curiosity at the Duke of Marlborough's head, by listening to sentences in German, French and English, pronounced by a *Speaking Dog* in sounds so correctly articulate, as to deceive a person who did not see him, into the belief that the *vox humana* was actually in use at the moment. PENKETHMAN exhibited at his booth in Southwark several *dancing dogs* imported from France.

170.—MRS. JORDAN.

A few days ago an advertisement appeared in the daily papers, announcing a dividend of *five shillings* in the pound, as now in the course of payment to the *bona fide* creditors of the late Mrs. DOROTHY JORDAN, formerly of Cadogan-terrace, and last of St. Cloud, in France. To those who have witnessed the honourable and liberal feelings of this benevolent woman in pecuniary matters—the generosity of self-denial with which she permitted her theatrical salary to be taken weekly, and devoted to expenses of a domestic nature ; which expenses, in any similar case, would have been defrayed from other funds—it must prove a source of much pain to see her name held up to the world as that of an insolvent, who had lived beyond her income, and defrauded the honest tradesman

of his just due. There are nearer connections to whom such a fact ought to be unbearable.—*Evening Paper.*

171.—QUIN.

QUIN sometimes said things at once witty and wise. Disputing concerning the execution of CHARLES I. "But by what laws," said his opponent, "was he put to death?" QUIN replied, "By all the laws he had left them."

172.—THE HAYMARKET THEATRE.

The Theatre in the Haymarket appears to have been re-erected by JOHN POTTER, who leased the King's Head Inn of JOHN and THOMAS MOOR, at a fine of 200l., in 1720. On this site he erected the Theatre for 1,000l., and expended 500l. on scenes, dresses, &c. It was finished December 1, 1720, and appropriated to the company of French comedians, who arrived in that month from Paris. Their opening was some time in January; on the 31st they acted, by desire of several ladies of the first quality, "*Le Tartuffe*," and "*Le Tombeau du Maître André*," with dances. The prices were—Boxes 4s., Pit 2s. 6d., and gallery 1s. 6d.

173. QUIN.

When QUIN was in his greatest fame as an actor he liv'd at Kensington, whence he used to go to the Theatre, and if there were people enough in the house to make it worth his while, he then began to dress himself. This was merely, the putting on of a coat, and waistcoat, and a dry wig; for the character of *Horatio* was performed in the same black worsted stockings in which he had walked to the house. The very head dresses which a modern actress of any celebrity is obliged to purchase, would formerly have paid the salary of a first rate actor; and now the very lowest company of strolling performers are much better dressed then were BETTERTON, QUIN, CIBBER, or GARRICK.

174.—BARRY THE ACTOR.

When the affairs of his (the Dublin) theatre took an unfavourable turn, and unlike Mr. SHERIDAN, he left every department unpaid and unsatisfied, the angry tradesmen used to besiege his door, vowing that though they had been frequently paid off with words, *this* time they would not depart without their money. Mr. BARRY would then desire to see them. A single claimant was admitted at a time. After a conference of some duration he returned with a pleased and satisfied countenance to the anxious and expectant crowd of creditors below. Judging by the reception their companion met what was likely to be their own chance, he was eagerly interrogated by the gaping crowd. "Well, you have seen Mr. BARRY?"—"Yes."—"You have got your money?"—"No."—"A part of it?"—"Not one shilling.—But Mr. BARRY spoke to me so kindly—seemed so distressed to keep me waiting—promised me *so faithfully* that *the next time* I called the money should be forthcoming—that he has, I know not how, got the better of my anger, and I could not find in my heart to press a gentleman any further."—

Memoirs of MRS. SHERIDAN.

175.—GARRICK.

When Mr. WHITEFIELD was building his Tabernacle in Tottenham Court-road, he employed the same carpenter that worked for Mr. GARRICK at Drury-lane Theatre. The reverend gentleman was at that time short of cash, and the carpenter had remained unpaid for some weeks. Being one day in conversation with Mr. GARRICK, he entreated the manager to advance him a little money, as he had been greatly disappointed by Mr. WHITEFIELD. GARRICK assisted the tradesman, and immediately waited upon Mr. WHITEFIELD; when, apologizing for his visit, he intimated to him what his carpenter had insinuated, at the same time offering him a 500l. bank note. It was accepted; and thus the Tabernacle of the sectarian was raised by the monarch of the stage.

176.—FOOTE.

Mr. DAVENPORT, a tailor, who had acquired a large fortune, asked FOOTE for a motto for his coach. "Latin or English?" asked the wit. "Poh! English to be sure; I don't want to set up for a scholar." "Then I've got one from *Hamlet*, that will match you to a button-hole—'List! list! oh, list!'"

177.—ANTIQUITY OF VENTRILOQUISM.

The Witch of Endor, the enchantress, who raised up SAMUEL, is called in Scripture *Baalath-Ob*, the mistress of *Ob*. The word *Ob*, in the original, expresses a diviner, a magician, a necromancer, a *ventriloquist*,—one who speaks in his belly, and thereby deceives the simple, making them believe that the voice speaks to them out of the earth, as if from the dead.

"Your voice shall be as that of an *OB*, which speaks out of the bottom of the earth."—Isaiah, 29, 4.

The Greeks also had amongst them *συναστειμίδες*, i. e. people that speak out of the bottom of their bellies.

178.—THE OPERA HOUSE A CENTURY SINCE.

The Opera of 1723 was supported by the introduction of a lady from Italy, of great musical celebrity, named CUZZONI. She sung in private for the amusement of the Prince and Princess of Wales, to their great satisfaction, previous to her appearance in public. Her engagement was at the enormous salary of 2,000*l.* per season, presuming on her future success; nor were the managers disappointed, for they were enabled, on the second evening of her performance, to demand and receive four guineas each ticket. An excellent epigram was made upon this lady immediately after her first appearance:—

"If ORPHEUS' notes could woods and rocks inspire,
And make dull rivers listen to his lyre,
CUZZONI's voice can, with far greater skill,
Rouse death to life, and, what is living, kill"

179.—DRURY LANE IN 1762.

Drury-lane Theatre was much improved in 1762, by lengthening the stage, enlarging the boxes and pit, and rebuilding the galleries. This alteration probably originated from the hopes of additional profit. Another in the management had its rise from the same cause; but the public were less satisfied than with the former, as in the latter the advantage was by no means mutual between the proprietors and their patrons. The managers intimated that nothing under full prices would be taken during the performance, and the intimation received no opposition till January, 1763; at that period symptoms of resistance appeared, and the public complained that the time had been when they were admitted to the boxes for 4s. 6d. to witness plays performed by BOOTH, WILKES, CIBBER, DOGGETT, NORRIS, PENKETHMAN, JOHNSON, GRIFFIN, PORTER, and OLDFIELD; and they were then compelled to pay 5s. to hear *half a play* acted by GARRICK, CIBBER, YATES, KING,(1) PACKER,(1) HOLLAND, OBRIEN,(2) BRANSBY, PALMER, and ACKMAN.

180.—MOSSOP AND MRS. BURDEN.

Mossop, when he had a good house, instead of endeavouring to extricate himself in any degree from his multiplicity of difficulties, grew desperate, and instead of paying either his tradesmen or performers, flew to the gay circles, where he was gladly admitted, and in order to mend his broken fortune by the chance of a die or the turn up of a card; of which, I believe, he was ignorant, and unac-

(1) These veterans died within a year of each other; the latter in September, 1806, aged 78. They were almost the last survivors of GARRICK's school.

(2) This actor was sent a short time before to announce a comedy for representation to the audience, and forgot the title; after pronouncing the word "called"—"called" several times, a tar vociferated "The Tempest;"—"True," said OBRIEN, "The Tempest."

quainted with the necessary arts to succeed. He has often left the theatre with a hundred guineas in his pocket, and returned home with an aching head and heart; but his guineas, with debts of honour, were all left behind. The Countess of BRANDON served him greatly; it is true; but often the money she occasioned being paid at the theatre, returned to her own coffers. This was the universal opinion of Dublin, and is all I can alledge in that case as to its authenticity; and as to Mossop's poverty, there needs no evidence of that unfortunate reality,

This conduct, and a train of evils attendant thereon, soon preyed upon his health, involved his talents with himself, and gave bitter sours to that temper which was, in its natural source, far from being one of the best. An instance of the poverty his performers were reduced to in 1764, I will, with permission, relate.

The Distressed Mother was to be acted—*Orestes*, Mr. MOSSOP; *Andromache*, by Mrs. BURDEN. The salaries had not been paid for several weeks, and she was in true character as the distressed woman. With infinite difficulty she forced access to the general, MOSSOP, for it was hard to accomplish admittance on account of many inconvenient reasons, unless on a Sunday, and on that grand levee day performers and tradesmen were too menial to be admitted. But with the force of a heroine, who dauntless surmounts all barriers and tyrants at will, so Mrs. BURDEN burst into the "inmost recess of his prison-house," and when arrived at the royal hall, she was as determined to preserve character—for at the awful voice of Mossop, she, *Andromache* like, was prostrate at the feet of her royal master, and uttered forth in tragic tones, "Oh! Sir, for God's sake assist me; I have not bread to eat, I am actually starving, and shall be turned out into the streets."

MOSSOP (in state).—"Wo-man! you have five pounds per week, wo-man."

Mrs. BURDEN.—"True, Sir; but I have been in Dublin six months, and in all that time have only received six pounds. I call every Saturday at the office for my salary, but "no money" is the answer; besides, Sir, your credit and your honour are at stake. How can I play *Andromache* the *Trojan Queen*, without black satin shoes?"

Mossop.—“Wo-man, begone ! I insist on your having black satin shoes for *Androm-a-che*. And, wo-man if you dare ask me for money again, I will forfeit you ten pounds, wo-man.”

So ended that real tragical scene of penury and pomposity.—*Weekly Miscellany of Fine Arts*.

GLANVILLE.

Lambeth, April 20, 1824.

SHAKSPEARIANA

No. XVI.

(1)—HEYLYN'S COSMOGRAPHY, AND SHAKSPEARE'S MACBETH.

The annotators upon SHAKSPEARE (that dust-raking race, to whom, however, we, if not the poet, are under some obligations,) have pointed out several works where the story of “*Macbeth*” is related with certain variations. They have, however, entirely omitted one author, who is very circumstantial on the subject ; I mean Dr. PETER HEYLYN, who published, I believe, the first edition of his “*Microcosmos, or Little Description of the Great World*,” in 1621. He is, as your readers no doubt are aware, a writer of much learning and celebrity, and among other books, his “*Microcosmos*” was a most popular production, being one of the earliest of the kind, and before 1629 it went through four editions in quarto : a great circulation indeed, considering the comparative fewness of readers at that period. Your subscribers may like to see his version of the history of “*Macbeth*,” which he gives when speaking of Scotland, and it may in future be added to the long list of *Shakspeariana*. He writes thus, in the fourth edition of his work, in 1629 :

“Now, before I come to *Kenneth*, I will in this place relate the story of “*Machbed*,” one of his successors ; a history than which, for variety of action or strangeness of event,

I never met with any more pleasing. The story in brief is this: *Duncan*, King of Scotland, had two principal men, whom he employed in matters of importance, *Machbed* and *Banquho*. These two travelling together through a forest, were met by three fairies, witches (weirds the Scots call them), whereof the first making obeisance to *Machbed*, saluted him Thane (a title unto which that earl afterwards succeeded) of Glammis; the second Thane of Cawdor; and the third, King of Scotland. 'This is unequal dealing,' said *Banquho*, 'to give my friend all the honours, and none unto me:' to whom one of the weirds made answer, that he 'indeed should not be king, but that out of his loins should come a race of kings that should for ever rule Scotland.' Having thus said, they all suddenly vanished. Upon their arrival at the court, *Machbed* was immediately created Thane of Glammis; and not long after, some new service of his requiring new recompence, he was honoured with the title of Thane of Cawdor. Seeing then how happily the prediction of the three weirds fell out in the two former, he resolved not to be wanting to himself in fulfilling the third. Therefore first he killed the king, and after, by reason of his command among the soldiers and common people, he succeeded in his throne. Being scarce warm in his seat, he called to mind the prediction given to his companion *Banquho*, whom thereupon suspecting as his supplanter, he caused him to be killed, together with his whole kindred; *Fleance*, his son, only with much difficulty escaping into Wales. Freed now from this fear, he built Dunsinane castle, making it his ordinary seat; and afterwards, on new fears, consulting with certain wizards about his future estate, was by one told, that he should never be overcome till Bernane wood (which was some few miles distant) came to Dunsinane castle; and by the other, that he should never be slain by any man born of a woman. Secure now, as he thought, he omitted no kind of license or cruelty for the space of eighteen years; for so long he reigned, or, to say better, tyrannized. *Macduffe*, governor of Fife, joining to himself some few patriots who had not yet felt the tyrant's sword, privily met one night at Bernane wood, and early in the morning marched (every man bearing a bough in his hand, the better to keep them

from discovery,) toward Dunsinane castle, which they presently took by scalado. *Macbeth* escaping, was pursued, overtaken, and urged to fight by *Macduffe*, to whom the tyrant half in scorn replied, that in vain he attempted his death, for it was his destiny never to be slain by any man born of a woman. 'Now then is thy fatal hour come,' said *Macduffe*; 'for I never was born of any woman, my mother dying before her delivery:' which words so daunted the tyrant, though otherwise a man of good performance, that he was easily slain, and *Malcolm Connor*, the true heir of the crown, seated on the throne. In the mean time, *Fleance* so thrived in Wales, that he fell in love with the Welch prince's daughter, and by her had a son named *Walter*. This *Walter* flying Wales for a murder, was entertained in Scotland, and his descent once known, he was preferred to be steward to *King Edgar*; from which office the name of *Steward* became the surname of all his posterity. From this *Walter* descended *Robert Steward* who was after, in right of his wife, King of Scotland."

(2)—POPULAR TRADITIONS RESPECTING MACBETH.

The author of the "*Statistical Account of Scotland*," happened, in 1772, to take an excursion to Perthshire, and being accidentally led to visit the remains of Dunsinane Castle, took a sketch of them, as they appeared at that time, and collected all the traditions respecting the History of MACBETH, that were current in the neighbourhood.

The story purported, that MACBETH, after his elevation to the throne, had resided for ten years in Carnbeddie, in the neighbouring parish of St. Martin's, which the country people call *Carnbeth*, or *Macbeth's Castle*, and where the vestiges of his castle are still to be seen. During those times, witchcraft was very prevalent in Scotland, and two of the most famous witches in the kingdom lived on each hand of MACBETH, one at Collace, the other not far from Dunsinane House, at a place called "The Cape (1)." MACBETH

(1) The moor where the witches met (which is in the

taking a superstitious turn, applied to them for advice; and, by their counsel, he built a lofty castle, upon the top of an adjoining hill, since called Dunsinane, which, in the Gaelic language, signifies *the hill of ants*, implying the great labour and industry so essentially requisite for collecting the materials of so vast a building. It was by nature strong, as well as fortified by art, being defended by high outer rocks, and surrounded by an outer wall, which enclosed a considerable space of ground, for exercising the men, &c. There was also a fosse which joined the wall and outer rocks, and a high rampart which environed the whole. From the top of the hill there is an extensive view of above fifty miles every way, comprehending Fifeshire, the hills in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh, Glen Almond, Crieff, the hills near Blair-Athol, and Bramar; Strathmore also, and a great part of Angus, are immediately under view. In short, there could not be a more commanding situation.

When MALCOLM CANMORE came into Scotland, supported by English auxiliaries, to recover his dominions from MACBETH "the Giant," as the country people call him (1), he marched first towards Dunkeld, in order to meet with those friends who had promised to join him from the north. This led him to Birnam Wood, where accidentally they were induced, either by way of distinction, or from some other motive, to ornament their bonnets, or to carry about with them in their hands the branches of trees.

The people in the neighbourhood stated, as the tradition of the country, that they were distinguished in this situation by the spy whom MACBETH had stationed to watch their motions. He then began to despair, in consequence of the witches' prediction, who had warned him to beware—

"When Birnam Wood should come to Dunsinane!"

parish of St. Martin's) is yet pointed out by the country people; and there is a stone still preserved, which is called "the Witches' stone."—Ed.

(1) Why he was designated with this cognomen, we are at a loss to imagine; perhaps some of our intelligent dramatic readers will take the trouble to inform us.—Ed.

And when MALCOLM prepared to attack the castle, where it was principally defended by the outer rocks, he immediately deserted it, and flying, ran up the opposite hill, pursued by MACDUFF; but finding it impossible to escape, he threw himself from the top of the hill, was killed upon the rocks, and buried at "the Lang Man's Grave," as it is called, which is still extant (1). Such were the traditions

(1) It might be, perhaps, worth while to examine this grave, as some curious facts might be ascertained from it.—It is proper to add, that, not far from it, is the road, where, according to the tradition of the country people, *Banquo* was murdered. Mr. PENNANT, in his "Tour to the Hebrides," in 1772, describing the curiosities of the *Isle of Jona*, remarks,—“On July 9th, arrived at Relig Orain, or the burying place of Oran: a vast enclosure, the great place of interment for the number of Scottish monarchs who were deposited here; and for the potentates of every isle and their lineage; for all were ambitious of lying in this holy spot. The place is in a manner filled with grave stones, but so overgrown with weeds that very few are at present to be seen. I was very desirous of viewing the tombs of the kings, described by the dean of the isles, and from him by BUCHANAN; the former says, that in his time there were three, built in the form of little chapels; on one was inscribed, *Tumulus Regum Scotiæ*. In this were deposited the remains of forty-eight Scottish monarchs, beginning with FERGUS II., and ending with the famous MACBETH. For his successor, MALCOLM CANMORE, decreed for the future *Dumfermline* to be the place of the royal sepulchre.”—We give this extract from PENNANT, to shew our readers, that Jona is considered by historians as the burial place of MACBETH; this assertion is in direct opposition to the above tradition. Indeed, for our own parts, we should decidedly give credence to the popular story of his remains being buried near the castle of Dunsinane, where he was killed, and also, because he was not of the regal family, but an usurper; and, therefore, unworthy of finding a grave among the hereditary kings of the Scottish line. Can

in the neighbourhood of Dunsinane Castle, in the year 1772; and our readers will naturally be struck with the resemblance between them and the celebrated play which SHAKSPEARE founded on the history of MACBETH. There is every reason to believe that our great dramatist was upon the spot himself, and was inspired with such uncommon poetical powers, from having viewed the places where the scenes he drew, were supposed to have been transacted.

In GUTHRIE's History of Scotland, (Vol. viii, p. 358,) it is stated, that, anno 1559, King JAMES desired our Queen ELIZABETH to send him, in that year, a company of English comedians; with which request she complied; and JAMES gave them a licence to act in his capital and before his court: "I have great reason," he adds, "to think that the immortal SHAKSPEARE was of the number." And in "the Account of Perth," before mentioned, (vol. 18,) we are told, that plays were actually exhibited in Perth, only a few miles from Dunsinane, in 1589. It is extremely improbable that the occurrences, as narrated by SHAKSPEARE, and the traditions of the country, could have borne so strong a resemblance, unless he had gathered them on the spot himself, or employed some other person for that purpose. The only material difference is, that, according to tradition, MACBETH threw himself from the top of a rock; but it was much more poetical as narrated by SHAKSPEARE, his falling by the hands of MACDUFFE, who was "not of woman born," and whom he had so deeply injured.

*On seeing a portrait of Madame VESTRIS hung upon
a time-piece.*

Oh! take away that envious spy,
Who talks of time in beauty's bowers,
When VESTRIS' heavenly smile is by,
Cold must the heart be that could count the hours.

any of our subscribers, versed in "ancient lore," throw a ray of light on this peculiarly interesting subject?—Ed.

THEATRICAL INQUISITION.

" Turn o'er the DRAMA'S ever varied page,
We lessons find for every sex, or age ;
Aspiring warriors eager for renown,
May learn 'tis mercy which deserves the crown ;
The Monarch, too, who boasts extended sway ;
Observe how worldly honours fade away ;
And generous patriots view with honest pride,
Once more their dreams of freedom verified."

NEW DRURY LANE THEATRE.

Journal of Performances, with Remarks.

March 29th.—Pizarro—Cataract.

30.—Merry Wives of Windsor—Lodoiska.

31.—Selection of Music.

April 1st.—Merchant of Venice—Spanish Gallants—All the Word's a Stage.

2.—No performance.

3.—Guy Mannering—Tekeli.

5.—King Lear—Cataract.

This tragedy is well known to all the readers of SHAKESPEARE, to be one of those mighty productions of genius, which serve to teach the imbecility of corporal mechanism in aiding the developings of the master-passions of the soul. Speech and action, are excellent auxiliaries to works of mediocrity, and are far from being at this time unduly appreciated ; but when the mind seeks to pour forth its most secret yearnings, and by the concatenation of almost impossible occurrences, heaves from its centre tones deep and unutterable as the heart itself, it is then that the powerless agency of the senses is felt, the mockery of sight and sound recognized, and the mere bodily organs proved altogether inefficient mediums to express the mental passions of man's nature, and the inwrought workings of his spirit.—No play exemplifies the truth of this more strongly than that of "*Lear*." Who, after reading this play, can ever hope to have his ideas of it realised by scenic representation ? 'Tis true MR. KEAN has attempted to perform *King Lear*, and perhaps he is the only one who ever could approach to the least resemblance of the original. His sudden transition from the extravagance of rage to the

deep-toned pathos of the most resigned passion, suits the alternate impetuosity of the king, and the yielding and subdued nature of the father, so prominent in this arduous character; and even his voice, which at other times wants compass, possesses all the under-toned gradations of an old and afflicted man; the utterance of whose afflictions being blended with the most intense consciousness, scarcely allows of an extent of voice, nor indeed requires it. These, however, are but poor qualifications for *Lear*, without a proper conception of him as intended by SHAKSPEARE. But Mr. KEAN's conception appears to us most intellectual, chaste and correct. His scene with his two daughters, *Regan* and *Gonerill*, was a consummate display of fine acting; in the very midst of the most agonized feelings, there was so much just repose, which ever exists in truth and nature, that no one seemed less conscious of the actor than the actor himself. And again, in the storm-scene with *Edgar*, as *Mad Tom*, the whole of it was complete. WALLACK sustained his part here most ably, and indeed throughout the whole character of *Edgar*. The concluding scene was restored from SHAKSPEARE, in the room of the ridiculous *melange* of TATE, who, in the refinement of his taste, saved the life of *Cordelia*, and destroyed the natural course of things, to make two lovers happy, which Dr. JOHNSON considered strictly observant of moral justice, and therefore very proper. In this scene, as given by SHAKSPEARE, the very extreme of pathos exists. *Lear* brings in the dead body of *Cordelia*, who had been hanged in prison by order of the bastard *Edmund*, and lamenting over her, he dies.

"Vex not his ghost: O, let him pass, he hates him,
That would upon the rack of this tough world
Stretch him out longer."

These words, by the bye, were omitted, and the curtain fell, somewhat abruptly we think. But speaking of omissions, what have they not omitted? Scarcely a speech of SHAKSPEARE, even in its *restored* state, was to be heard throughout the play, whole and entire. But we fear it is too late to complain of these things now. Mrs. W. WEST's *Cordelia* did not, upon the whole, please us. There is a some-

thing provincial in several of the tones of this lady, and her general style of acting is declamatory; a style as far removed from real feeling, as *Poor Tom's* pretended from *Lear's* real madness. We are not at all disposed to pick a quarrel with this lady; but we cannot help thinking that a little less sobbing and rather more repose—in short, less of acting and more of nature, would by no means detract from the reputation she has for some time deservedly enjoyed. With the exception of WALLACK, we have nothing to say very favourable of the other characters. Neither Mr. POWEL, as *Gloster*, nor Mr. YOUNGE, as *Edmund*, both of whom have some very material parts to sustain, did any thing to deserve praise. The ladies *Gonerill* and *Regan* are in themselves too forbidding to speak of—not a SIDDONS herself would get a favourable word from a critic in such characters. The house was very crowded, and Mr. KEAN made a powerful impression on the audience.

6.—Stranger—Chinese Divertisement—Killing no Murder, [Benefit of the Philanthropic Institution.]

We were prevented from witnessing Mr. KEAN's *debut* in the character of the *Stranger*, this evening—and being unwilling to pass over the first appearance of our favourite actor in so arduous a part, we beg leave to extract the following observations from the *British Press* newspaper—the dramatic critiques in which are generally written, with a sense, feeling, and discrimination, which we cannot too highly applaud.—We trust we shall have sufficient opportunity hereafter to offer some remarks of our own.—

“The pleasure we derived from witnessing Mr. KEAN's performance, has considerably strengthened upon reflection—for it has assisted us to discover that, which the immediate impression of the moment was insufficient to teach us. To explain—KOTZEBUE, we think, did not intend to make the betrayed friend and dishonoured husband a misanthrope: the principles of high honour and the intensity of love, with which he endowed him, would not allow of this inversion. When our faith in the human heart has been violated, and the chill touch of despair has checked the ardent current of our young and confiding hopes, the transition is not to *hate*, which is a passion; but all passion is dead; we no longer feel interested &

nough with the ways of men or their concerns to *hate* them; the sensation that lodges in our cracked hearts is that of a dark and dreary void—the blank unimaginative melancholy of the soul. This would induce our conduct to be *not* social, but not repulsive; it would bespeak, it is true, a want of harmony or sympathy of mind, but it would not evince disgust, much less hatred towards others: and here we account for the reluctance of the *Stranger* to receive so much as the thanks of the father and mother of the child, whose life he had saved at the peril of his own. If this conception be correct, we are justified in saying, that there was in Mr. K's *Stranger* too much morose and soured impatience shewn towards the world, and which made him appear in the first three acts like a man, who having received some mighty injury from *one*, wished to wreak his sense of it upon all. But mark the art in all this! Had KEAN been less repulsive to our feelings—had his manner gained upon us by carrying to our hearts a sense of his misery, the contrast in the ensuing part of the character would have been less striking, and the effect proportionably weakened. But when the morose man recognises in *Count Steinfors* his friend, then a light bursts forth and around him, and tells us that he is not that which we had hitherto thought him to be; that his heart, though shattered, was not seared; and that nature's kindlier elements still blended with his being. From this moment Mr. K. was all that the most sanguine friend could hope. The deep and immoveable sense of his dishonour, the thought of the villain who did it, seemed too mighty for him to endure; and when he told the *Count* that "the fiend *seduced his wife*! and bore her from him," his very heart seemed to burst in telling of the deed. Then, as if exhausted by the conflict of an intense love and a profound principle of honor, his spirit glided into a most calm but extreme pathos:—a sense of the world's opinion, and his injuries, every now and then breaking forth, sufficient to tell how heartless and unlike the true dictations of nature are the severe prohibitory judgments of the world in cases like his.

"Oh! what a feast would it be for the painted dolls and vermin of the world, when I appeared among them with

my runaway wife upon my arm ! What mocking, whispering, pointing ! Never ! never ! never !”

The asperity with which this was spoken, and the resolved energy with which Mr. K. uttered the words “Never ! never ! never !” betrayed a mind capable of seeing the injustice of the world’s ways in these matters, yet not courageous enough to withstand them. There was also to be discovered, in this bootless sneer, a feeling still latent in his heart, to be restored to the beautiful sinner who had so torn it. The last scene was triumphantly effective, and stamped the completion of Mr. K’s success in this very trying and interesting character. Mrs. WEST’s *Mrs. Haller*, did not indeed partake of the heart-rending grief that so particularly distinguished Miss O’NEIL in this part—but her acting was on the whole exceedingly excellent—there was a quiet repose in her anguish, undisturbed by starts and sobs, which we were happy to witness, and which has not of late belonged to this lady’s style of acting. After the play, Mr. TERRY came forward, but the audience called for Mr. KEAN, who immediately appeared, and received the enthusiastic applause of a most delighted and crowded audience.

7.—Selection of Music.

8.—Merry Wives of Windsor—Deaf as a Post—Lodoiska, [Benefit of Mr. DAVIS, proprietor of the horses.]

9.—No Performance.

10.—Stranger—Rival Soldiers—Family Jars, [Benefit of Mr. BUNN, Stage Manager.

Last Night of performing until Easter.

19.—Virginius—ZOROASTER ; or *The Spirit of the Star*, [1st time.]

Easter Monday is quite a day of theatrical celebrity in the metropolis. As all the “Lenten entertainments” have ceased in the preceding week, the winter theatres, with their auxiliaries, the Cobourg, Surrey, &c. re-open on the evening of this day with fresh splendor, and as it were, with “new-born beauties.” Drury-lane has long enjoyed a high reputation for the attractive novelties it presents to its patrons on such an occasion ; and last night it sustained if not enhanced, the celebrity it enjoyed for scenic, splendors and costly decorations. Mr. MACREADY ap-

peared as *Virginus*, in the tragedy that bears that title, a part which he has made so peculiarly his own, and which is one so admirably suited to conceal his defects, and to set off his merits to the utmost advantage, that it deserves the fullest and most unqualified commendation. Our opinion of his performance of this character has been already so fully stated, that it is not necessary for us to enter into a detail of his acting—we shall therefore proceed to the new Easter Melo-drama, which, with regard to literary merit, plot, interest, &c. is one of the worst yet produced at this theatre. How Mr. ELLISTON can suffer himself to be “fooled” into the expense of bringing forward such trash, we cannot conceive, we can only wonder—and at the same time pity him; criticism we shall not waste on such a truly nonsensical production; in fact there is nothing to criticise, except we go into an extensive review of the merits of the painters and the admirable efforts of their pencils. Acting there was none, WALLACK, and HARLEY, Mrs. WEST and Miss BOOTH walked on and off the stage in each scene with about half a dozen lines each, to speak of the trashiest nonsense we ever heard; and how an audience could possibly sit and bear it out with patience, is out of our power to define—we were forced to do it—and such another trial of our patience we trust never again to undergo. As far as the skill of scene-painters and the splendid operations of those magnificent caterers for the dramatic taste of the age, the dress-makers, Mr. BANKS, and the Misses SMITHS could go, wonders were performed; but all was marred, as is generally the case here, by the bungling management of the machinery. Whilst these pieces put money into the treasury of the theatre, they are not likely to be discontinued, as the manager may fairly say:—

“That ’tis his business to provide
For people’s taste, and not to guide;
And with the nice and squeamish town
That novelties alone go down.”

The story of this piece and that at Covent-garden Theatre, are somewhat similar. *Gebir* [Mr. WALLACK,] and *Pamina*, the rightful heiress to the throne of Egypt, are

mutually attached. They meet in the humble walk of life, but the power of enchantment soon raises *Gebir* from a lowly station to the dignity of a principedom. In his exalted sphere of life he spurns her, with whom, in adversity, he was willing to unite his destinies. Fortune veers, and she, in turn, in her real character of Queen of Egypt rejects him. Various vicissitudes—fights, processions, &c. intervene, and, as may be expected, "love's young dream" becomes a reality, and they are finally married. *Pamina* is accompanied by a female attendant [Miss BOOTH,] and *Gebir* by a male attendant [Mr. HARLEY,] who is somewhat whimsically promoted from the rank of a swine-herd to be Generalissimo of the prince's army. The rise of BONAPARTE was but slow promotion to the rapidity with which a cottager here becomes a king, and his servant a field-marshal. By a power, "of having all his wishes complied with," granted by *Zoroaster*, whose disciple he was, *Gebir* desires to be placed in the centre of the earth, and to have the most beautiful scenes of nature exhibited before him. Here an invocation of one of the *Genii of the Harp*, was beautifully sung by Master EDMUNDS.

"World! let thy wonders appear at our call;
 Beauties that gem this terrestrial ball,
 Hear the spell of the harp, and appear one and all;
 We charm thee with sounds, we have caught from the
 spheres,

In morning's warm blushes, and evening's soft tears,
 Earth's wonders and beauties be seen at our call;
 Hear the spell of the harp, and appear one and all!"

Here an opportunity occurs of introducing a panoramic representation, painted by STANFIELD, in a style of execution, far surpassing any thing of the sort ever before witnessed, in which the wonders of nature and art, and the various hues of sunset, twilight, moonlight and sunrise, are gradually depicted in the "most natural manner imaginable." It commences with a *View of the Great Desert*, with an Arab's tent, then represents a *Caravan of Merchants*, crossing the ocean of sand—then the *Sphinx and Pyramids of Egypt*—and the gigantic ruins of the great *Temple of Apollinapolis Magna*, all painted from DENON'S

celebrated views. We do not recollect to have seen a finer exemplification of perspective painting in scenery, than was evinced in the latter view, it alone ought to immortalize the painter. *The Colossus of Rhodes* and the *Bay of Naples* followed: the view of *Fort St. Elmo and the Bay*, with the *Lighthouse and Mole terminating with the Appenines* was grandly picturesque. *Mount Vesuvius* with the effects of an eruption, and the concluding scene of the *Grand Falls of Tivoli*, with all their proud and classic recollections, sacred to the muses, were such vivid resemblances that they really beggar all description.

After having obtained "sovereign sway and mastery" over the imp of the harp of Memnon, *Gebir* gives loose to the most unbridled ambition. Not content with imperial rank, which he causes the genii to confer on him, he prays for immortality—this last demand enrages *Zoroaster*, who destroys his palace by an earthquake, and thrusts him forth a wandering outcast. He is seized with remorse and acknowledges the justice of his fate, and after his virtue has been severely tried by the magician he is again restored to favour and receives the hand of *Pamina*, now Queen of Memphis.

HARLEY's self complacent whimsicality afforded some laughter, and that wonderfully clever and sprightly pantomimist, Master WIELAND, showed himself capable of doing much more than he here had scope for. The elastic precision with which he springs from a distance upon a little trap, just big enough to let him through, and vanishes like a spirit, indeed, instantly through the boards, was one of the neatest exhibitions we ever saw of the kind. Neither Mr. WALLACK nor Mrs. WEST had any scope for their abilities, and of course did not exert themselves much. We should not forget to notice the *Corps de Ballet*, perhaps the most perfect part of the establishment. NOBLE and BYRNE were indeed spirits of air and their graceful little wives accompanied their evolutions with corresponding vivacity. The piece was not indeed condemned, though considerable and just opposition was made to its repetition; but one half of the company left the boxes, and the pit was somewhat thinned before the performance was half over; and it may therefore readily be conjectured whether it is

likely to remunerate the hundreds of pounds which have been spent upon its production.

20.—Winter's Tale—Ibid.

21.—Hypocrite—Ibid.

22.—Road to Ruin—Ibid.

23.—Rob Roy—Ibid.

24.—Kenilworth—Ibid.

COVENT GARDEN THEATRE.

Journal of Performances, with Remarks.

March 29th.—Pride shall have a Fall.—Harlequin and Poor Robin.

30.—Native Land.—Hunter of the Alps.

31.—No Performance.

April 1st.—Native Land.—Hunter of the Alps.

2.—Selection of Music.

3.—Pride shall have a Fall.—Clari.

5.—King John—Miller and his Men.

6.—Pride shall have a Fall.—Hunter of the Alps.

7.—No Performance.

8.—Man of the World.—Hunter of the Alps.

9.—Selection of Music.

10.—Pride shall have a Fall.—Roland for an Oliver,
[Benefit of Mr. FAWCETT.]

Last night of performing until Easter.

April 19th.—School of Reform—The SPIRITS OF THE MOON, or the Inundation of the Nile, [1st time.]

After the comedy in which Mr. RAYNER sustained the part of that odd compound of roguery and preaching, thrown into the character of Tyke, the holiday folks were presented with a piece under the above title. Upon productions of this description, only got up, as the theatrical phrase has it, to answer a temporary purpose—to make children laugh, and servants talk of the wonders they have seen at the play-house, it would be fastidious to enter into any minuteness of comment; for, generally speaking, neither their merits nor defects deserve the labour of cri-

ticism. The persons frequenting the theatre at these festive seasons of the year are satisfied with glare and noise; and if their eyes and ears be both pleased, they look for nothing farther. In the melo-drama of last night there were—spirits good and bad—shadows cast by the sun at noon-day—and gardens and pavilions seen by moon-light—several fierce encounters, which alternately excited the hopes and fears of the children—subterranean caverns, whose pillars were resplendent with brightness (strange as that may seem);—ruins, citadels, pavilions, and groves—all pass before the view in quick succession; and, to do justice to the artists, were executed with very considerable ability. The plot, of “the Tale of Enchantment,” from what we could gather of it, is to this effect. The empire of Egypt being seized by *Zerac*, [FARLEY], who has destroyed the lawful monarch, the rightful heir *Mirza* [Miss LOVE], assisted by a prophetic Seer, and following his counsel, joins a band of merchants going with their merchandize to the Great City, and there contrives to find admission into a secret cavern, in which the Usurper had deposited a quantity of treasure, and an enchanted bow and arrow, upon whose safe possession depend at once his empire, his life, and the hand of a fair princess, *Zephira* [Miss BRAUMONT], niece to the monarch whose throne he has usurped. The Princess, as is usual, is betrothed to another, and dislikes the Usurper, whom she spurns with a degree of courage not often to be found among the ladies of the East. The rightful heir is also assisted by *Nerad*, [T. P. COOKE] the confidant, of the Usurper, who in the hour of peril betrays his master to obtain his mistress. The Usurper, to secure his throne, devotes himself to some infernal deity, and like most persons who make such bargains, brings on himself speedy and irretrievable destruction. The minor incidents introduced to effect the downfall of the Usurper, need no mention; but in fairness we must say, that a henpecked tailor, and a blustering conceited overseer, found very amusing representatives in Mr. BLANCHARD and Mr. MEADOWS. Brief as the real story was, there was an utter want of continuity in its parts, and the language of those Egyptians resembled very closely that which is every day to be heard amongst the least

educated portion of our own neighbours in and about this metropolis. There was dancing and singing—and a moving panorama representing a caravan of merchants crossing the desert and terminating with their arrival at the ancient mart of the City of Grand Cairo, painted by GRIEVE. Some of the scenes were admirably well painted, particularly the “*Reflex of the Nile when the Moon is at the full, when the waters are retiring from Egypt, and the fabulous appearance of the Spirits of the Moon;*” the *Royal Gardens by Moonlight*; the *Pavilion of Ceres* in the Festival, previous to the sowing the Land with Corn; and the *Grove of Fate*, which afterwards changes to the *Temple of Isis and Osiris.*” Mr. FARLEY is of course both author and arranger of the piece and his faculty in all that appertains to fiery Dragons &c is too well known to need comment. Mr. GRIMALDI jun. fights an admirable combat with BRADLEY of Cobourg celebrity who made his débüt (for Covent-Garden) on this occasion, and acquitted himself with his usual “furiousity” [Vide P. EGAN] Miss LOVE played delightfully, singing, dancing, and acting throughout the evening: there was also a fair portion of excellence in the pantomime of T. P. COOKE, and the few tricks of Young GRIMALDI reminded us of his (late) imitable father.

We can say little in praise of the “Tale of Enchantment,” which we must confess had no such influence upon us, nor did we throughout its performance hear any of those hearty laughs and joyous applauses, even from the children which we were wont to do on other occasions. The curtain did not fall until within a few minutes of one o’clock. Mr. FARLEY announced the repetition of the Melo-drama amidst as ill-deserved cries of “bravo” and applause, as we ever recollect to have heard. There was nothing new in the machinery, and no interest whatsoever in the story, and we think the piece is not likely to have so long a run as many of its predecessors of the same kind.

20.—John Bull—Ibid.

21.—Pride shall have a Fall—Ibid.

22.—Clari—Hunter of the Alps—Ibid.

23.—Man of the World—Spirits of the Moon.

24.—Pride shall have a Fall—Ibid.

ENGLISH OPERA HOUSE.

March 25th.—Mr. MATTHEWS was again *At Home* this evening, at this theatre, to a crowded assembly of visitors. The abilities of this actor are well known and appreciated; for years he has succeeded, by his single exertions, in amusing and gratifying his auditors, and his extraordinary powers are still unimpaired; still he attracts and delights by the versatility of his talents, the freshness of his humour, and the exquisite effect of his mimicry. His *Trip to America* has been long anticipated. The public have been anxious to behold a portrait of our brother JONATHAN, and to know in what manner the sketch would come from one who is well known to ridicule every body and every thing; but with so much pleasantry and good feeling as, at least, to place a feather on the poisoned shaft. We do not think our trans-atlantic brethren will think themselves flattered by, or feel obliged to Mr. MATTHEWS, for his "lecture on their peculiarities, characters, and manners;" yet he has so mingled his sly hits at his own countrymen, with the jokes at JONATHAN's expense, that we doubt whether JONATHAN will complain of his treatment, or at all regret the sojourning of the prying traveller in the new world. Mr. MATTHEWS commenced his entertainment, or "Lecture," as he terms it, by informing his auditors that since he was last "At Home," he has been abroad, and is now happy to find himself "At Home" again. Like CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS he had visited America, and like him, had been instigated by the yellow fever, that is to say, a fever for yellow boys; but in one respect his case was different from that of the discoverer, who met with an ungrateful reception when "At Home." The vessel in which Mr. MATTHEWS embarked was hailed when off New York, and he had his first lesson on American peculiarities. "Is the fever at New York?" asked the captain of the packet. "Yes; I guess," was the reply. "Is it fatal?" "Very fatal, I reckon." "Are there many dead?" "A great many, I calculate." Mr. MATTHEWS's chief travelling companions are JACK TOPHAM and his cousin BRAY, the former of whom had come to years of indiscretion, and had been sent to America to be kept out of

harm's way ; the latter is a sort of guardian, with short breath and short legs, who worships the wit of cousin, and every moment exclaims, " that boy'll be the death o' me." On their landing, they meet with a specimen of American innkeepers, an old gentleman with curiosity in his eye, and a segar in his mouth, who informs them 'tis four o'clock, and they should have arrived sooner if they wanted dinner ; at length he sends them wine, which JACK TOPHAM, pronounces to be mulled " Day and Martin," while his cousin, who sits with his mouth half cocked, ready to explode as soon as his relative speaks, bursts out into a laugh, and declares " he never heard that afore." MATTHEWS then relates his visit to Baltimore, where he was well received. On his arrival, many of the first people called on him and left their cards, an attention which was paid him in several other cities. He then tells some amusing tales ; among others, one of an Irishman in a steam-packet, who was astonished to see a number of turtles on the deck, and asked, with native simplicity, " Are they real or mock turtle ?" A great many stale puns, and a great many bad puns, are revived for the amusement of the audience. Mr. M'ADAM is called the *Colossus of Rhodes*. At length the traveller arrives at New York, and gives an interesting and laughable sketch of his *compagnons du voyage* ; particularly of a Mr. RAVENTOP, an elderly, drawling, melancholy-toned gentleman, who loves anecdote and fun ; a Major GRINSTONE, who blushes with ardour and a tight stock ; and a Mr. PENNINGTON, who somewhat resembles CURRAN, and who enters into a defence of his countrymen, against the slanders of those, who so generally visit America—the poor, the bad, and the idle—and wishes that some one, with a pen plucked from the wing of peace, would tell to Englishmen how ardently the bosoms of their trans-atlantic brethren beat towards them. This observation, as well as many of a similar nature, were loudly applauded by the audience. The next sketch is of the African Theatre, where Mr. CÆSAR ALCIBIADES HANNIBAL HEWLETT, enacted the part of *Hamlet*, recited " To be or not to be," and then sung a song about an opossum which runs up a gum tree, and is pulled down by the long tail by a racoon in the hollow. Mr. MATTHEWS then gives an account of

an American army, in which fishing rods, pitch-forks and umbrellas, are allowed to take the place of muskets among the soldier folk. This description, and the song that accompanies it, is the most libellous part of the performance, but it is not more so than his old account of the review of the City Volunteers in Hyde Park ; and, even here, the Americans cannot complain of unfair usage. Part the Second of the performance commences with the attempt to engage a servant, who refuses to be the "help" of an Englishman, or to *hire* him to become his master. Mr. MATTHEWS then describes his dinner with General JACKSON, and sings the song of his Poet Laureat, a Frenchman, which is one of the pleasantest *morceaux* of the entertainment. JONATHAN W. DOUBIKINS, a real *Yankee*, is perhaps the closest imitation of the American *Cockney*, that can be imagined. His stories of his Uncle BEN, are so delightful that we long to be acquainted with Uncle BEN himself, even though he cheated us as he always choused JONATHAN. This character approaches too near to nature to suppose otherwise than that Mr. MATTHEWS studied JONATHAN W. from actual life. An American gentleman, of the highest respectability, has assured us, that J. W. DOUBIKINS may be found at the outskirts of every town in the United States—the same self-conceited nasal twang—the same *liberal* sentiments—the same elevated opinion of his sweet self—and that it is a perfect picture. Monsieur MALLET's visit to the Boston post-office, for a letter from his beloved daughter in France, exhibits Mr. MATTHEWS in an entirely new line—the *pathetic* ! Few, although laughing the previous moment, can avoid shedding tears at the powerful display of anxiety and distress of the poor French emigrant father, and his look of horror and consternation when he discovers that he has destroyed the letter for which he had been waiting so long—the best tragedian in London could not have produced a greater effect.

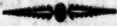
The *enticements* for Mr. MATTHEWS to perform in a *Theatre*, where the yellow fever has carried off all the stars, is painfully whimsical. The German *locum tenens* of an American judge, with his pestilent misrepresentations and explanations of the laws, is an admirably drawn character from life—gravity itself could not withstand Mr. MAT-

THEWS's personation. We would defy the whole bench of English judges to keep their *Eschequer*, *Common Pleas*, or *Chancery* faces in any sort of serious order, or to escape with unruffled wigs, when they honor the *At Home* with a visit. The song of the "*Illinois Inventory*" is rapid and pleasing ; and the *Farewell Finale* winds up the *table acts* with perfect good humour. The third part of the evening's entertainment is filled up by a Monopolylogue, entitled "*All Well at Natchitoches*," The spectators in the pit or boxes little know the pains that are taken, or the *tact* that is required, to produce a piece with seven or eight characters, all to be represented without aid or confederacy, by one performer. This difficulty is accomplished, and with success. MATTHEWS was the first actor who attempted this novel and arduous manner of diverting his auditors. YATES, HARLEY, REEVE, Monsieur ALEXANDRE, *cum multis aliis*, have tried it, but we will venture to assert, that in this branch of his art MATTHEWS stands *alone*, (Mr. ELLISTON stood "*Single*," and did it admirably too.) MATTHEWS's several assumptions of the characters, of the cobbling *Colonel Hiram Peggler*, who thinks that every thing "does him a deal of good," whose voice is thick with rum, and whose head is filled with deadly hatred for the lodger on the first floor of his stall, Monsieur *Capot* ; of the monstrous fat negro runaway, *Agamemnon* ; of *Jonathan W. Doubtless*, in propria persona, where the character of the Yankee is kept up perhaps better than in the original story, where American liberty and negro slavery jostle each other in the same parenthesis, and where dear *Uncle Ben* again does *Jonathan*, and "walks into him complete." Nor must we omit to notice the French emigrant tailor, *Capot*—Mr. MATTHEWS's spare figure, and perfect pronunciation of the language, added to the characteristic manner in which he sings the two little introduced *Vaudevilles*, render this personation exceedingly amusing. We turn from this to the unfortunate Hibernian speculator, *Mr. Cornelius O'Sullivan*, a funny mixture of mirth and rags, *want* and *wit*, who finishes the entertainment with perfect satisfaction to himself and to the audience.

We have thus presented our readers with a sketch of Mr. MATTHEWS's plan of entertainment ; and we will not do

him the injustice of further enumerating in detail the items of his catalogue of the peculiarities and manners of our American brethren, for his voice and action impart a comic fascination to his description of them, which we own our pen is not sufficiently contagious to catch or to convey. Indeed, the principal and peculiar merit of his performance is, that it can be felt and appreciated only, by those, who are eye-witnesses to the versatility of talent it displays. Criticism can only convey a vague and unsatisfactory idea, where the subject for its comment is a person, not a play, and where " nods and becks," not words and sentiments, furnish leading matter for observation. Although the lecture of Mr. MATTHEWS owes its principal attraction to the ever-varying and comic countenance of the lecturer, yet it also communicates some very useful knowledge, conveyed in a very pleasing and popular way. Much, however, as we admire the ingenuity with which Mr. MATTHEWS has collected his observations, and the discrimination with which he has arranged them, yet do we more admire the sentiments favourable to the American character which Mr. MATTHEWS has imbibed, and which he endeavours to inculcate on the minds of his countrymen. No vulgar prejudice—no national antipathy—no scornful sarcasm, disfigures the talent with which he represents the peculiarities of "*Jonathan*." This is not only good acting—it is more: it is good feeling. And the present surely is a time when a kindly disposition between America and this country cannot be too earnestly recommended and encouraged. An American might enjoy a laugh at his eccentricities, as Mr. MATTHEWS "shews 'em up," as heartily as we laughed ourselves last season at our own peculiarities and strange vagaries at Epsom and other places of public resort. The weapon of his wit is a sword of brightness, that "never carries a heart-stain away on its blade." His imitations are so perfectly humorous and inoffensive, that Mr. MATTHEWS might fairly be permitted in this way to share with poets and painters the—

"Æqua potestas quidlibet audendi."



 MINOR DRAMA.

 ADELPHI THEATRE.

This pleasant place of amusement closed its season on Saturday 10th April on which occasion the following address was spoken by Mr. LEE :—

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This being the last night of our present season, the pleasing duty devolves on me, of offering to our patrons and friends, our most grateful acknowledgments, for the continued prosperity with which this Theatre has uniformly been honoured.

Our success will stimulate us to renewed exertion. During our recess, every effort of unwearied preparation will be made by the Management of this Establishment, to deserve a continuation of that patronage, with which it has been honoured.

In the name of the Proprietors, and every Member of this Theatre united, I beg to offer you our best thanks, and sincerely wishing you every possible happiness till we shall again have the pleasure of meeting your smiles in October next.

I most respectfully, Ladies and Gentlemen, bid you adieu.

 SURREY THEATRE.

The tragedy of "*Alasco*"—written by Mr. SHREE, and about the rejection of which by the new deputy Licensor there has been lately so much diversity of opinion—has been produced at this Theatre curtailed into 3 Acts, with considerable applause. The acting of the principal characters by Messrs. H. KEMBLE, ROBOTHAM, LOVEDAY and Mrs. CLIFFORD was excellent, and the scenery by TOMKINS and WALKER, was highly applauded.

Of the tragedy itself and its suppression we had intended to have offered a few remarks—but as it is now before the public—the curiosity which its suppression is calculated to excite will place it in the hands of judges infinitely more competent to appreciate its true value than either

Mr. COLMAN or the Lord Chamberlain—we can only observe that we think it an insult to the English public that they are not to be trusted with the hearing of such passages as it has pleased Mr. COLMAN to run his pen through.

There is an end to the inspirations of all dramatic genius if a writer cannot put into the mouth of his characters those feelings and expressions without which they cannot be drawn. What would have become of the fine delineations of SHAKESPEARE's historic fancy, if his fervid imagination had been fettered by the *veto* of Mr. COLMAN, or subjected to the dominion of the Duke of MONTROSE? What foundation has Mr. COLMAN for thus insinuating that the springs of loyalty are so dry that every sentiment of freedom is a spur to faction? Mr. SHEER has marked in italics the lines upon which Mr. COLMAN passed his sentence of condemnation. We really could not have suspected, till this tragedy came before us, that such a distrust of popular feeling prevailed in any part of the Government. We consider this marked manifestation of it to be as injurious as it is unjust. Of all the passages marked by the Licensor for omission, we do not find one that can in the slightest degree authorise it. There are none throughout that might not, we should think, have been uttered without danger to the DEY at any private theatricals in Algiers.

On the 10 April the Surrey Theatre closed until Easter with the above piece and the *Burning Wood*, a melo-drama founded on the *Woodman's Hut* being for the benefit of the proprietor Mr. WILLIAMS who delivered the following address in an eloquent manner.

Ladies and Gentlemen—I have the honour of presenting myself before you, in order to acknowledge the very great kindness your partiality has manifested by your presence this evening, as well as upon all occasions during the past season. I am also deputed by the performers to express their gratitude for your uniform support and indulgence, with an assurance that it shall be at all times their study to merit a continuance of your liberality. We mutually feel the obligations which must stimulate our future exertions in your service. This House, which has already attracted public approval, will be further beautified and embellished, during the short time between this and the Easter

opening, and every addition made that taste and industry may dictate. The Company engaged are of approved talent, the doors opened to native genius, and the dramatic arrangements varied and critically judicious. For my own part, Ladies and Gentlemen, my first thoughts shall be to render the entertainments worthy of you, and my last the gratification of giving you ultimate satisfaction. I hope I do not say to much when I flatter myself the Surrey Theatre will be considered second to no house in the universe. Ladies and Gentlemen, permit me once more to offer you our mutual and sincere thanks, and for the present respectfully to bid you farewell.

APRIL 19th.—There is a more than usual *gaieté de cœur* apparent among the idlers at the Easter holidays; for they are generally accompanied with fine weather, and all the cheerful recollections of spring. The Proprietors of Theatres greet them most welcomely, as a season that is likely to afford them a profitable harvest, and provide for them with due diligence. The Management at this Theatre has not only produced three new pieces for the holidays, but it has employed the short time afforded by the recess, for entirely re-embellishing the interior of the house, which has been done with great taste. The front of the boxes is now ornamented with rich gilded mouldings on a pink ground, and the upper part of them is finished with velvet drapery of the same colour. The proscenium has been retouched, and the whole interior of the house has a brilliant effect. The first piece that was performed, entitled "*THE FIRE-WORSHIPPERS, or the Paradise of the Persia*," is taken from Mr. MOORE's poem of the same name and the standard Classic known in every living language by the name of "*Lalla Rookh*." The spectacle contains a great deal of very splendid scenery, and affords opportunity for the introduction of several interesting incidents, connected with the ancient Ghebers and their Arab conquerors. An unfortunate accident occurred at the end of the first act of the spectacle, in a scene where a real camel which the bills state was "*the real camel* which was presented by *Ali PACHA to the Emperor NAPOLEON*," was brought upon the stage. The poor animal was destined to meet with a death as unfortunate as that of its master. In leading him out,

he trod upon a trap-door, which gave way, and the animal fell through the aperture that had been occasioned by the bolts of the door breaking. GALLOTT, who was upon its back, threw himself on the stage and escaped unhurt; but we regret to say, the camel died in great agonies in about half an hour after the accident happened. The Manager came forward, and requested the indulgence of the audience in permitting him to curtail the last scene of the first act, in consequence of the accident; which reasonable request was of course acceded to. We understand that the camel had cost Mr. WILLIAMS, the proprietor of the theatre, above 100 guineas. The scene of the next piece, called *PLOTS IN MADRID, or the Painter's Study*, is laid, as its name imports, in that country which is not more fertile in bigotry than it is in burlettas; it is a bad version of the *Portrait of Cervantes*; and the fun of it consists in the intrigues of chambermaids, and the ardour of two lovers, who each procure a living man to represent the ghost of the poet. These living ghosts are brought to the study of the painter, for him to exercise his skill, which gives time, in the confusion that arises, for one of the lovers to run away with his daughter. The piece would have been too dull for endurance but for a practical grossness which was luckily, and in a desperate extreme, resorted to by one of the actors whose name deserves no commemoration. The last piece, entitled "*THE FLOATING BEACON, or Norwegian Wreckers*," is a very pretty vehicle for conveying various incidents, characteristic of the valour and feeling of British sailors. It is a highly wrought piece founded on an interesting story to be found in one of our periodical miscellanies. The workings of the darkest passions; the scene appearing to be raised up, as it were, in the wilderness of the ocean, amidst the eternal blasts that carry these wild agents of crime, still further every moment, from all sympathy and communion with the rest of the inhabitants of the earth, render the Drama exceedingly powerful. The dialogue is spirited, and the scenery very creditable to those who are engaged in that department. The house was well filled; and with the exception of a few minutes interruption in consequence of the accident we have noticed, the performances went off extremely well.

COBOURG THEATRE.

This house re-opened on Easter Monday, under the management of Mr. WATKINS BURROUGHS, who we understand has taken the Théâtre, for some time to come. Mr. B. has commenced his season, with the same liberality, spirit, and taste, which we have before, had so often occasion to eulogize, as characterizing all his proceedings behind and before the curtain. The audience part of the house has undergone a complete revolution, and has been fitted up in the most elegant manner, and we really conceive it to be what the bills express "the most superb and beautiful theatre in the kingdom." Every thing on the stage was entirely new, new scenery, new dresses, new decorations and even new actors,—at least, so to this house.—The company is indeed most effective,—and we never witnessed an evenings entertainment in which each actor appeared so anxious to please, or so attentive to his duty. The company consists of "men staunch to the sacred cause" — viz. Messrs. BENGOUGH, DAVIDGE, BRADLEY, HAINES, HEDNERSON, BROWN, (*Jemmy Green*) from Adelphi, LEWIS, from Sadler's Wells, JERVIS, from Surrey, and Mr. BURROUGHS.—Messdames WATSON, PARROCK, STANLEY, and Mrs. WAYLETT, from the Adelphi, with many others. If ever the patronage of the public was well deserved—the present proprietor of the Cobourg is indeed highly deserving of it. The "*WEIRD WOMAN OF THE ISLES*, or *Scotland's Ancient Days* was the first piece produced—and was full of intense interest.

The story is founded for the greater part on Mr. GALT's novel of the *Spacwife*, and it may be necessary to inform those who have not read that production, that the principal incident refers to the conspiracy formed by *Murdoch*, Duke of Albany, against the life of his nephew *James I.* of Scotland. According to the historical fact, the young monarch fell a victim ; but such a catastrophe being unfit for a melodrama, is not introduced ; while on the contrary, *James* is represented as completely defeating the fell design of his cruel uncle and his band of conspirators. The *Weird Woman*, (Mrs. STANLEY) an undisguised *fac simile* of *My Merrilies*, takes a leading part in the whole business of the

piece, and is principally instrumental in discovering the scheme which *Murdoch* had contrived for effecting his purpose. In the last scene, he stands confronted with her, when it appears that he had in early life, accomplished her ruin, and then left her with two children to perish in indigence. One of these, a daughter, is preserved from all the dangers that surrounded her, and by the fabrication of the melo-drama, now married to the young king, with which event the piece concludes, while her unnatural father falls a prey to all the horrible agonies of remorse. We have not space to remark fully upon the excellent acting displayed in this piece, but we cannot forbear noticing Mrs. STANLEY's representation of the *Weird Woman*, which was one of the best exhibitions of talent in that line we have ever witnessed.

After the melo-drama followed a farce, called "*Nothing like Luck*," though we could scarcely discover why it was so denominated. The hero of it is a garret-dwelling poet, whose uncle pays him a visit; and the plot of the piece consists in the endeavours of the nephew to receive the uncle properly; which is done by cheating him of his venison, and sending his goods and chattles to another uncle—the pawnbroker. The third performance was "*The North Pole*" brought forward, we presume, because the North Pole is so much the subject of conversation at present. The piece opens with the vision of a *Capt. Stedfast*, who is about to visit the Polar regions, and who receives the promises not only of *Neptune* and *Britannia*, but of *Fire*, *Air*, *Earth*, *Water*, *Summer*, *Winter*, *Spring*, *Autumn*, and moreover of the *East Wind*, the *West Wind*, the *South Wind*, and the *North Wind*, who each deliver a neat and appropriate speech on the occasion. All this is well enough but we were a little overpowered at seeing one of these genii (a very odd sort of genius he was,) in a red mantle, a black stock, and a stiffened collar! To be sure dreams are remarkable for their inconsistencies, and so far this might add to the natural effect of the scene. This *Captain* by-the-by, we neither see nor hear any thing of afterwards; but we are introduced to another *Captain*, who, it seems, has been wrecked on an island in the North Sea. His crew mutinies, deprive him of his savings of bread, and leave him and his child to perish, while their ringleader takes

off his wife, "because she is beautiful." This is, in every sense of the word, a libel on the character of British seamen, and we were astonished that the audience could tamely sit and witness it. In the end, the *Captain* resolves on destroying himself, his wife, who had been saved when the mutineers were drowned, in their attempt to escape, and his son : but at the moment he is about to precipitate himself and them into the sea, a boat puts off from a distant vessel to bear them from the shore. By some very awkward mismanagement of the machinery, they had no sooner got in than they were obliged to get out, for the boat would not stir with so heavy a cargo, and they very *deliberately walked through the ocean to the island back again !!* Two men in red coats then came forward, to make preparations for the entrance of "*a ship of immense size, fully rigged and manned*" (so said the play-bill) ; and this exhibition closed the amusement of the evening, and dismissed a good-humoured audience from an Easter Monday's entertainment at the Royal Cobourg Theatre. The house we understand has since its opening been nightly crowded, and we rejoice to hear it. We are informed a variety of new pieces are in active preparation, we shall in our next pay particular attention to them and report accordingly.

ROYAL AMPHITHEATRE.

The chief entertainment produced among the numerous entertainments at this house for Easter Monday, was a "new military" and so forth "Spectacle" entitled "*The Battle of Waterloo*," by Mr. AMHERST, and he is described as the author of several popular pieces: nor can we wonder at his popularity; for considering the exploits of which he treats, his text is of a surprising and delightful brevity. "Actions speak louder than words," and a plain story is soon told. *Napoleon* and the *Duke of Wellington* severally array their forces, and in half a dozen sentences inspire the staff to a due heroic sense of the quarrel: the rest is done by volleys of musketry mingled with red and blue fires. A little mummery betwixt *Molly Maloney* "a character well known to the 92nd regiment," and the soup-

eating French, allows the armies time to advance from the affair of Ligny to the fight of Quatre Bras, and from thence onward to the fight of Waterloo. All the rest is done to the life. The brave successor of the unfortunate House of Brunswick shows us to our faces the very manner of his death. The 42nd regiment couch and deploy in a field of barley. There is also the death of SHAW the life guardsmen—the field of battle by moonlight—BUONAPARTE moralizing and taking snuff with a truth-telling Flemish peasant—an ammunition waggon on fire, together with a most wasteful and inconvenient explosion of gunpowder: before which last, we should propose that a *saute qui peut* flag should be put out, that the asthmatics might have a better chance to avoid suffocation. It is very difficult to describe the total, except by saying that the newspapers of that momentous period are here dramatized with episodes picked up from military conversation. The scenery is unusually good, and the manœuvring of the forces leaves the Artillery-ground immeasurably behind. But upon this point, no wonder: for the play bill intimates that the troops were represented by “100 picked Waterloo men”; and to this we would add, that the horses of the cavalry behaved quite as well as if they had been in the fight with their riders. The peculiar attraction in the line of horsemanship is Mr. DUCROW which certainly outruns imagination. His first entry could be compared to nothing but the swiftness of the wind, and he seemed as little to need the saddle to support his feet. He is the most expert, graceful, and surprising performer yet seen in the ring. The whole of the entertainments went off with thunders of applause.

SADLER'S WELLS.

This Theatre opened on Easter Monday under the proprietorship of Mr. WILLIAMS of the S. T. and was as usual thronged at an early hour. The house has been much improved as to decoration and ornament since last season. and from the patronage and favour always conferred by a certain portion of the public upon Sadler's Wells, we feel confident the manager will have no reason to regret his expenditure, or to complain of the unkindness of his

friends. After the Caledonian divertisement, called the *Birth-Day*, the melodrame of *ORA* or, *The African Slave* was performed. The frequenters of the minor theatres will recollect that this piece was first performed and favourably received at the Surrey, under the title of the *Foulahs*, Vide Vol. V. page. 96, and we venture to assert, that it has lost no interest in the representation by being transplanted. The conclusion is very tragic, but it produced this evening a very contrary effect upon the audience: By some mistake the troop of grenadiers who were in pursuit of *Cato*, [H. KEMBLE,] the slave, and who were to be the chief instruments of his death, did not come on in proper time, and *Cato* received only a couple of mortal wounds, from pistols fired by his master. While he was reeling about the stage, apparently undecided whether he should fall until he had received a whole volley, the Captain of the troop, or the Prompter, (we know not which), was heard from behind the scenes, calling out to the men "*Why don't you come forward!*" This unlucky order was heard by the audience, and produced loud bursts of laughter, in the midst of which poor *Cato* was obliged to fall and expire. The great attraction of the night was of course the Pantomime, and it would appear the proprietors were determined to make it worthy of its title *THE EASTER OFFERING, or Harlequin's Golden Harvest*, for they produced no fewer than nine of those active and necessary characters, Harlequins, Clowns, and Columbines. The scenery was excellent, and exhibited many well-known views of London. In the course of its performance, there were several practical allusions made to the Cavalry regiment, which has recently made so much noise in Dublin. A contemptible coxcomb in a dashing military uniform, was made to represent the members of that *Highly respectable Corps*. The recent anecdotes of "*The 10th don't dance.—The 10th don't fight,*" &c. were not forgotten, though less was made of them than might have been expected. The audience manifested their approbation of the night's entertainment in the most unequivocal manner.

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OR,

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MAY, 1824.

“The play, the play’s the thing.”—HAMLET.

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DRAMATIC ORACLE.

Errata in our *last*.

In Mr. DE WILDES *lines to* BYRON, p. 59, l. 11. read Truth-tried.

The Decline of Stage amusements, may, we think, be attributed to other causes than those J. Z. points out; his letter is not suitable.—We are much obliged to our old friend T.W. for his *pacquet*; the whole of which we shall endeavour to give in our next: part of a former communication he will find in the present Number.—*Green Room Secrets*, by A. WISEHEAD, bespeak their author to be an egregious *blockhead*!—J.J.J. should have addressed to the Editor, at the Publishers, and not to the publishers themselves.—The *quick-time* in which the *Essay* of B. JONSON has been written, is no excuse for carelessness. The author does not understand his mother tongue:—The piece has met the fate of some hundreds before it!—SCENIPHOLIS (of Cambridge) some time since, forwarded us some *remarks on the Ancient Drama*; if he will send the conclusion they shall appear.—*The Adventures of an Actor*, are we fear too long for our purpose, if the author permits us to curtail, they shall have a place.—PEEPER's Letter on the late mysterious circumstances relative to a great tragedian, is for obvious reasons, inadmissible.—Once more (in answer to A. SCOUT's note) we will have nothing to do with *secret memoirs*. Our business is with the *public stage*.—E. F. is under consideration.—J. G. F. perhaps in our next.—If *Le Telescope Dramatique* be rendered into English, it might perhaps amuse those of our readers, who are desirous of knowing something concerning the Drama on the other side the channel. We have no time to translate.—*The Repository*, shall be inserted.—ORLANDO not in our next.—*Lines to* Miss HEALEY, Mrs. CLIFFORD, &c. are not worth printing.—A curious account of ancient Taverns, as connected with Dramatic writers, &c. has been sent us, which we shall present to our readers the earliest opportunity.—SAM SAM's SON, is requested to accept our acknowledgments for the excellent budgets he forwards us. He is a correspondent after our own heart—for he never makes any enquiries concerning them, but allows us to take our own time and convenience as to their insertion—we wish our other contributors did the like. Near 20 other correspondents must remain unnoticed *sine die*.—H.M.W. and J.D.V. shall be attended to.

